



The 179th Airlift Wing, Ohio Air National Guard, Mansfield, OH

Jan. 2003

Mission unites countries and squadron

**By: Staff Sgt. Shannon Parks
179th Public Affairs Office**

It is a country rich in philosophy, faith and culture. A country that touts famous cities such as Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. A foreign land that houses a little known military base called site 53. The country is Israel and recently 41 members of the 179th Airlift Wing worked to improve the living conditions at the concealed location.

The 179th AW team consisted of 35 members of the civil engineering squadron, three members from the communications squadron, two members from vehicle maintenance and one medical technician. The team performed dormitory construction that will support all branches of the Department of Defense.

There were four dormitories; one was fully operational. The team worked on the power, heating and ventilation



The 179th CES poses on the concrete slab that they built into dorm C while at site 53.

systems and the structure of the walls and poured curbs and floors for the dorms, said Lt. Col. Jay Williams, CES commander.

Even though members of CES are a well-trained group of professionals the trip did come with a few challenges.

"Initially we had material and equipment challenges. The supplies that were supposed to be there were not," Williams said.

Luckily, CES had the vision to send members of their key staff in advance. These members were successful in identifying and resolving important issues before the core team arrived.

"We tried to stay two to three days ahead of the work," said Master Sgt. Ron Carpenter.

Once the core team arrived the goal was to get things up and running as quickly as possible. "The location was unfamiliar and we weren't yet familiar with each

other's personalities but we quickly came together as a team," Williams said.

Williams thought the deployment afforded him the unique opportunity to interact and get to know everyone. "In the course of a UTA you don't learn as much about people as you do on a deployment. You learn their strengths," he said.

For example, Tech. Sgt. Tom Koehler, 179th medical technician, is a carpenter as a civilian. "Koehler was instrumental in playing dual roles on the deployment," said Williams.

Koehler wasn't the only person participating in dual roles. When the communications team of Master Sgts. Wayne Campbell and Duane Fulk weren't running phone lines they were pounding hammers.

"When we weren't configuring desktop computers or doing phone work we were working out of giant



MSgts. Christie, Shull and Campbell construct the walls for dorm B.

Story continued on pg. 4

Another busy year for unit in '03

Another year is coming to a close and what a year it was. As I said during my comments at the wing holiday party on Sunday of December UTA, each of you "answered the call" and more during this past year, starting with the events of Sept. 11th and the additional work that created, continuing on with AEF/ECS deployments and then preparing for and doing an absolutely fantastic job during the IR/UCI. You made the sacrifices from your families and civilian employers, and did it all...in style. By your actions, you proved why the Guard is such a vibrant and valuable part of our heritage and Department of Defense. I can't thank you enough.

I'd like to be able to tell you that 2003 will be easier and we could take a breather, but you all know I can't. The world situation is demanding now more than ever, that we stay alert and are prepared to do whatever it takes to preserve our freedom and safety. I know you are ready for whatever comes, but I also ask you to ensure that your family is ready too. Please take time to both enjoy your family over this holiday season and also ensure they are prepared should you be called to duty. Make sure they know who to contact for problems that might occur and assure them the Guard and 179th Family Support are here to help in any way possible. We certainly hope we don't deploy to fight a war, but if we do, we need to be ready in every way...this includes our families.

This past month, senior leaders from the Air National Guard traveled to Denver, Colo. for the annual ANG Senior Leadership Conference. At this conference we received many strategic presentations, including a variety of DoD leaders in Washington, Vice President Cheney and our new Director Lt. Gen. James. The message they brought was very positive as to how we responded and performed our duties



Leadership Perspectives

Col. Richard Green

during the past year, but the outlook for additional funding or manpower was certainly bleak. Doing "more with less", or at best the same, seems to be the operative word. As always, we'll suck it in and make it all happen by working smarter and doing without a few things, but getting additional resources or hiring authority just doesn't seem to be in the cards.

The "B" word was brought up a number of times at the conference, which stands for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). This process is scheduled for 2005, but it's never too early to start doing whatever it takes not to be on that list. I can assure you we are not on any present list for possible closure of which I am aware. However, with Ohio being one of the large states with respect to our high number of units, we will certainly be looked at very closely during the process. If the process just analyzed the important stuff like mission, trained and ready people, weapon's system and facilities or even performance, there would be no way we would ever even be considered. However, processes such as BRAC

are very political and as such may not seem to be as logical as one might hope.

So having said that I just want to assure you that both your state headquarters and wing are proactively doing whatever is necessary to assure our future. Ohio is extremely fortunate to have exceptional leadership, starting with our TAG right down to the units. We have outstanding units that are ready and making a difference and that's worth fighting for.

Although this is suppose to be a joyous season, there is one aspect of this time of year that I take with mixed feelings and that's the retirement of our friends and co-workers who have come to the end of their careers. These are true patriots who have given their lives to serving in the Guard and did a great job. They represent hundreds of years of service and a wealth of experience. We thank them for making a difference and being a part of this great organization and wish them the best and ask that they come back often to reminisce the past and share in the present and future. We'll miss every one of them.

I hope you and your family have a very happy holiday season and I look forward to serving along side you this coming year. "Together we are Succeeding!"

Bataan memorial march

In March, the Army ROTC Department of New Mexico in conjunction with the New Mexico Guard is hosting the Bataan Memorial March.

This 26.2 mile march began in 1988 as a means of honoring those men and women who were responsible for the defense of the islands of Luzon, Corregidor and the harbors of the Philippines.

If you are interested in participating or want more information contact Lt. Col. Mark Lynskey at 419-520-6284 (DSN 696-6284).

Ohio TAG cracks down on visa use

**By: Master Sgt. Randy Dunham
179th Wing Historian**

Reports of misuse and abuse of government travel cards read like financial horror stories and create public relations nightmares for the active duty military and federal government.

In one case, a government cardholder paid for breast augmentation surgery for his girlfriend. In another case, a cardholder bought more than \$500 worth of Mary Kay cosmetics with the card. There are countless other stories, each with astonishing breaches of rules for use of the card.

In Ohio, the highest-ranking member of the National Guard is pulling all stops to make sure the same doesn't happen with his troops.

"I am directing management at all levels to ensure that necessary internal management controls are established to prevent abuse, misuse and lower the delinquency rates to meet NGB standards," Maj. Gen. John Smith, Ohio's adjutant general, wrote in a memorandum to commanders and key leadership throughout the state. "Reports of misuse and abuse...are a matter of concern to me."

He's just one of several senior government leaders to delve into the mystery of why government workers, including the military, continually misuse the credit card or renege on repayment obligations. In March, Pentagon officials formed a task force to find ways to cut the pervasive abuse of the credit cards at the Defense Department level. Meanwhile, in July, Deputy Defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz announced the Pentagon would begin using data-mining software to monitor purchase patterns in search of misuse or fraud.

And locally, the crackdown is being felt at the 179th. Reports are generated several times each month with informa-

tion that includes any action – whether actual purchases or declinations – on government cards. The report also includes delinquencies and lists whether accounts are open, suspended or cancelled. They are forwarded to commanders and first sergeants with members' names, amount owed and account status.

"We have very strict regulations on what is acceptable and what to do if we discover misuse or delinquency," said Staff Sgt. Sheila Pryor, the person on base who manages the government card program. "Once someone is identified as delinquent or misusing their card, I have to report to ANG and tell them what disciplinary action was taken locally."

Col. Richard Green, wing commander, believes in the government card program and backs the rules for use.

"We are afforded the opportunity to get the card because we travel on behalf of the Ohio Air National Guard," he said. "That is what enables members to get a higher credit limit than with the typical card. It's also a benefit for those who cannot otherwise get a credit card. Therefore, it's essential we follow the rules and treat the program with respect."

Pryor said the contract to have a government travel card is between Bank of America and the cardholder, not the wing. Therefore, the wing has no authority in reinstating the card if it is cancelled or suspended.

If a member is 30 days late on a payment, the account is considered delinquent by the Bank of America. An account that goes 60 days late results in the card being suspended until the account is brought current. If the account hits 90 days delinquent, the card is cancelled.

"At that point, there's no turning back," Pryor said "That's between the member and the bank. They handle collection procedures, billing dates,

and even taking the card back."

The wing's part of the agreement, under the auspices of the government, is to maintain control of use and monitor unauthorized activity, Pryor said.

"We do that through education programs, delinquency reports, first sergeant and commander intervention, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

Since the agreement is between the member and the bank, payment history and delinquencies become part of the member's credit report.

Pryor said the base has its share of delinquent accounts. A report generated two weeks before the November drill had 39 past due accounts listed. Of those, five are permanently closed. The largest amount owed by a member on that report was \$4627.83. That account has been closed. That same report when generated on Saturday of the drill dropped to only 16 delinquent accounts. Typically, she said, a delinquent report will include only a dozen or so accounts. For instance, in August, 16 people showed up on the 30-day or greater past due report.

She said the most common problem in delinquencies occurs when people are deployed for more than 45-days.

"They fail to use the split-disbursement option and think they can just put it off until they get home," she said. "That's not the case. That's exactly why the split disbursement is there – so we can pay directly to the Bank of America on the members' behalf."

As for unauthorized purchases, Pryor said it's not nearly as bad at the 179th as it is on the active duty side. And, often, the misuse is a result of people not knowing the rules.

"We have some common misconceptions about when to use the card," she said. "But they're few and far between."

Story continued on pg. 4.

Visa story continued...

One common misconception is that the card can be used during a UTA.

"On the contrary," she said. "You cannot use the card on UTA. In addition, if you are home station on training days and live inside the commuting distance, you cannot use the card. If you are not on orders, not deployed, not paying for lodging or a meal, you cannot use the card."

Pryor said the tracking system now used is so detailed she can tell if someone used the card for identification to rent a video.

Green takes the reports seriously and communicates frequently with base leaders about the importance of monitoring card use. He also makes those leaders toe the line when handing out punishment.

"The government card program is a wonderful tool," he said. "But irresponsible use and failure to pay the bill can end a career. I want it to be perfectly clear that the DoD, the adjutant general and I cannot, and will not, allow our guard members to abuse the program."

CES story continued...

Quanson huts; building walls, framing doorways and doing insulation and dry walling. We worked hand in hand and I learned a lot," Fulk said.

Members of CES repeated Williams' sentiments about what they learned on the deployment. "It is always great to get everyone out and work hard as a team. I learned a lot more about concrete. I also got an opportunity to work with our newer troops," said Master Sgt. Mark Robertson.

During their two-week deployment CES performed 3,690 man-hours, poured 165 cubic yards of concrete, moved 67,000 pounds of equipment and completed 46 work orders. Carpenter, who participated in these tasks, also worked side by side with the Israeli's.

"My experience was inspiring. I not only have a deep respect for our troops but I have a deep respect for the Israeli's. I am glad we live in the U.S. where families are safe. They live in constant fear yet they were helpful and understanding," he said.

Unit Public Affairs Representatives serve as voice for many base sections

**By: Staff Sgt. Rebecca Jordin
179th Unit Public Affairs Repr.**

Do you know what I like best about being a Unit Public Affairs Representative (UPAR)? Having a voice. Not just a voice for me, but also for my peers. It is nice to be able to offer inputs from the "working persons" perspective. Everyone knows there is no glory in most of our jobs. So, it is nice to have the opportunity to highlight the people and activities that always seem to go unnoticed. It is as easy as recognizing the crew chiefs that work on Saturday or the maintenance troops that drop everything to fly off to a deployed location and stay just long enough to fix a broken aircraft. So many people go above and beyond, without any type of recognition and I get to be their voice. What a great opportunity and awesome responsibility to be the voice of the unrecognized.

When I first heard the public affairs office was looking for people at the shop level to assist in finding stories I was immediately interested. When I found out that all training would be provided, the individual could mandate the involvement level and I would be helping to promote the deeds of my co-workers, I was instantly hooked. I was a little leery of the idea of writing stories, but was put at ease by the public affairs staff's reassurance of unconditional assistance.

The training was simple and thorough, covering everything from interviewing techniques to photography tips. The format was clear, concise and to the point with all questions encouraged. The training provided me with a new understanding of how to deal with any type of public forum, from media questions to my neighbors curiosity. With the super-

charged global activities occurring in today's political arena, the ability to answer questions pertaining to the military's involvement is a good skill for all of us to possess.

Since officially becoming a UPAR, I have been involved in some great opportunities! I escorted media for the return of civil engineering, I was interviewed by the local newspaper and the local television news. I was actually on television and in the newspaper (both of which had terrible pictures of me), but oh well. I also had the opportunity to be involved in some aspects of our base which I would never have been able to be a part of otherwise, such as being a media escort for the Shadow Flight. I tell you what...those retirees sure know how to eat!

I had the privilege to write a story, which was printed, about the great job maintenance and AGS do in working together on a daily basis. It was nice to be able to highlight some of the key characters that help our mission get completed every day, without a hitch, and with no recognition.

Becoming a UPAR is a wonderful adventure for me, providing me with opportunities that were never there before. I think if anyone has an interest in becoming a voice, they should consider becoming a unit public affairs representative... it has served me well.

Become a UPAR

Call the public affairs office at x377 to learn more about the UPAR program and/or to sign up for a future training date in 2003.

UPARs are needed to help escort media, provide story ideas and work with the public affairs office in a variety of capacities.

Scholarships available

The 179th Airlift Wing Family Support Group Scholarship Program is designed to help defray educational costs for deserving students who will be or are currently enrolled as full-time students in a college, university, trade or business school. Two \$500 scholarships are awarded for the 2003-2004 academic year. Any spouse, child or grandchild of an active or retired 179th AW Guard member is eligible to apply for the scholarship program. Application forms are available in the lobby of Bldg. 422 after Jan. 2, 2003. Completed application forms must be postmarked no later than April 14, 2003.

Part-time job openings

The 179th Airlift Wing Medical Squadron has several openings for health professionals. They are specifically looking for individuals to fill vacancies in nursing, as well as physicians and allied health professions.

Many of these professions come with sign-on bonuses and student loan repayment incentives. For more information, contact our Health Recruiter toll free: (800) 642-8365, ext. 219.



Ho, ho, ho...horsey!

Lt. Col. Jay Williams and son, Trey, participate in the 179th Family Support Group's 7th Annual Children's Carousel Party on Dec. 6, 2002 in downtown Mansfield. The evening's events brought out more than 200 Guard members, families and friends. The event included unlimited carousel rides, cookies, punch and goody bags from Santa. Fundraisers held throughout the year by FSG help fully fund this event which is held every year the Friday prior to the December UTA.

Prepare finances now for uncertain future

Experts say it is vital for military personnel to get their financial affairs in order long before they get the call for active duty. Here's what they recommend:

Find out how much of a difference in pay you might experience if you are mobilized. Even though some companies will supplement your military pay, such a benefit might last for only a few weeks or months. Current law requires employers to give only an unpaid leave of absence.

Talk to your supervisor. Discuss how your employer is going to get by without you. Give your company as much information as possible about how long you expect to be away.

Automate your finances. Consider signing up for home online banking and

an automatic bill-paying service, in which your bills can be paid electronically each month while you are away. Make sure your beneficiary designations are up to date.

If you know your income will drop, contact your creditors in writing. Under the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act, lenders are obligated to cap interest rates at 6 percent. This includes your mortgage, car loan and credit-card interest rates. But you have to ask for this protection, and you may have to show that your ability to pay has been "materially impaired" by your service.

Look over all your expenses. There may be some contracts, depending on the terms, that you can cancel. If, for

example, no one is going to be driving your car, you might be able to cancel or reduce your car-insurance coverage until you return.

Know your rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act of 1994. Make sure your employer has a copy of the law. This law assures a part-time soldier that he or she can return to work in the same or a similar position. You must be reinstated with the same seniority, retirement benefits and rate of pay as you had before going on active duty.

This article is a partial reprint from the Washington Post Writers Group on Dec. 1, 2002, authored by Michelle Singletary.

Holiday photos make the season warm and bright



The 179th AW celebrates this joyous season with families and friends at the annual carousel party, the commander's luncheon and the wing holiday party. Happy holidays!

Islam proclaims peace and respect

By: Chaplain Bob Jackson

The struggle between good and evil is present in every human being, every family, nation and religion. That is a life long struggle for each of us and every society. Religion seeks to help individuals and societies grow toward goodness. Sadly, great evil has been done in the name of religion. Peter in his second letter warned Christians of the ignorant and unstable who would distort Scripture to their own ruin. Every generation society and religion faces this threat – since humans are very skilled at justifying their desires and any means to attain them.

Since 9/11 there is much talk about Islam. Is it a religion that promotes peace or violence? Every person is entitled to his or her opinion but I would ask you to consider the following:

First, while we may disagree strongly about beliefs, we should not degrade or disrespect what is sacred to others. To insult Mohammed or ridicule the Koran accomplishes nothing positive. It is emotional venting that offends and alienates Muslims. Such comments are being re-broadcast in Muslim countries to convince people that America is attacking Islam and recruit them to the radical, violent movements within Islam. That increases the danger to our country and forces serving overseas,

and is why President Bush has repeatedly affirmed his respect for Islam and the right of people to worship as they choose. We can and should condemn violent actions and hateful attitudes within Islam and America without generalizing that to all Muslims or all Americans.

Second, yes there are calls to violence in the Koran and also in the Bible. Both were written in the early stages of the religions when there was a struggle for survival. But the Koran and Bible provide far more emphasis on avoiding violence, the just reasons for war and limit what can be done in self-defense. Look at the use of the “Ban” in early Israel’s history. The “Ban” required every man, woman, child, infant and animal be killed. In I Samuel, Saul is ordered by God to exterminate the Amaliks and is rejected as King for not killing all. Psalm 137 speaks of the joy of smashing the little ones against the rock. When taken in its whole and as understood by people of faith, it is clear the Bible and the Koran are not books that promote violence or hate.

Third, again it is true there has been violence and war in the name of Islam. Also, the record of Christianity is not without significant blemishes. Christians fought and killed one another over differences (Orthodox vs.

Catholic, Spanish Inquisition, English attempts to destroy Catholics in Britain and Ireland, the Hundred Years War between Catholics and Protestants). They also persecuted and killed Jews and other non-Christians. In fact, the first freedom to worship for dissident Christians came when Muslims conquered the Middle East. Even today, we have the KKK, Aryan Nation, violence in Ireland and the Balkans, but most Christians reject religious violence and seek to live in peace and Godly love.

Islam is 1,400 years old and is confronting the same challenge that Christianity passed through. Will it be taken over by those who preach hatred and violence or will it root out the bad and nurture the truth that comes from God? Muslims with God’s help must do this. We must call them to be true to the godly virtues of peace and respect of life that Islam has always proclaimed to be its faith.

As in the struggle against Communism, we must condemn injustice and defend against violent attacks while offering the people a hope of lives lived in freedom. We confronted the evil of Communism, not the Russian and Chinese societies that were enslaved by it. So too, we must condemn fundamental Islam not the Islamic faith and culture it wishes to enslave.

Annual golf tournament puts 179th on top

On Sept. 16, 2002 a group of determined golfers from the 179th AW Logistics Squadron set out for southern Ohio to compete in the 2002 Adjutant General’s Annual Golf Tournament. The tournament, held at Cook’s Creek Golf Course in South Bloomfield, consisted of 144 golfers with teams from Air and Army Guard units throughout Ohio. Col. (Ret.) Chip Augello and Jerry Wilson, representing the Ohio National Guard Associations, sponsored the tournament.

The 179th team was successful in their quest for victory and took first place in the annual competition. The winning team consisted of Senior Master Sgt. Jeff Smith, Tech. Sgt. Bret Simmermacher, Staff Sgt. Brian Boyer and Maj. Bill Harris. The team shot 13 under par, slightly beating Lt. Col. Doug Green of the 179th Logistics Squadron and his team of individuals from other units who finished in second place with 12 under par.



The winning golf team from the 179th AW.

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Stories or story ideas may be submitted to the Public Affairs Office for publication consideration in the Buckeye Airlifter. Information should be emailed to shannon.scherer@ohmans.ang.af.mil. The Buckeye Airlifter is scheduled to be mailed one week prior to the UTA weekend.

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affairs with information.



What's Up Doc?

Maj. Richard Gajdowski conducts his first flight physical on Col. Mark Stephens after returning from the USAF School of Aeromedicine at Brooks AFB, Texas. Gajdowski is an emergency physician in his civilian job and has been a member of the 179th AW since August 2001.